

17th September 2021

Measurements

“Observe due measure ...”

Hesiod, Works and Days (c. 700 BC)

I used the words “countless” and “immeasurable” in my reflections a few weeks ago. But measurements still matter, so it’s not surprising that the importance of measuring things properly comes up from time to time.

The following conversation *didn’t* happen between me and either of my two grandsons. But it could easily have done ... Indeed, I wish it had!

We’re walking past the home-straight of Musselburgh Racecourse ...

Him: What’s that sign for?

Me: Which sign?

Him: That one, up there. The one that says 4F.

Me: That means four furlongs.

Him: What’s a furlong?

Me: It’s a distance measurement.

Him: How long a distance?

Me: You get eight of them to a mile.

Him: So how long is that?

Me: A mile?

Him: No, a furlong thingy.

Me: Two hundred and twenty yards.

Him: How long’s a yard?

Me: Three feet, or thirty-six inches.

Him: We do metric now. So how long is that in centimetres?

Me: A yard’s just under a meter, about 0.9.

Him: So why don’t they use meters on the sign, then?

Me: Well ...

Silence ...

Him: That one says 3F.

Me: So, if there are two hundred and twenty yards in a furlong, and a yard is about nine tenths of a meter, roughly how many meters would three furlongs be?

Him: Too many numbers to paint on a sign.

A prayer for today

“How wide and long, and deep and high, is the love of Christ?” Paul asked in his letter to the Ephesians. And the answer? Too much to measure ... Amen

An original reflection by © Tom Gordon

Based on a piece from “The Very Life of Life” by the author – www.ionabooks.com

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